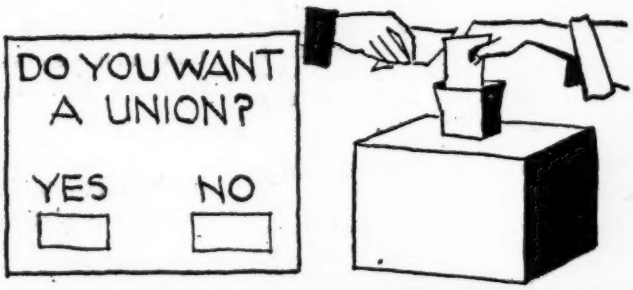
The Southern PATRIOT

Volume 4 | Nashville, Tennessee, June, 1946 | No. 6

YOUR STAKE IN LABOR'S ORGANIZING DRIVE

The Southern Drives Mean Unions in Your Town

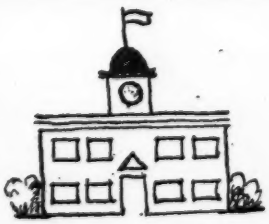


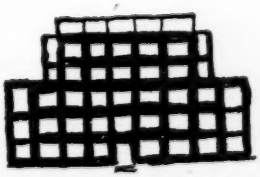
Unions Mean Higher Wages

Higher Wages Mean Higher Living Standards For Workers

High Living Standards Mean Higher Incomes For Whole Community

Higher Incomes Mean Bigger Tax Revenues, More and Better Schools and Hospitals





Southern Patriot Chart

What Every Southerner Should Know About Unions

How does an organizing drive get started?

If workers in a plant want a union, and the majority sign cards authorizing a certain union to represent them, the National Labor Relations Board will hold a secret ballot election in which all employees in the bargaining unit requested may vote. The NLRB counts the ballots, and if the union wins, it is certified as the bargaining agent, and the employer is required by law to recognize it.

Will the organizing drive mean strikes all over the South?

That depends largely on whether Southern employers will negotiate with unions in good faith. After a union has won an NLRB election, representatives of the union and management bargain over the terms of a contract, covering wages, hours and working conditions. In the overwhelming number of cases, a contract is arrived at satisfactory to both parties, with no strike. In many cases, issues in dispute are settled by arbitration. In a small minority of cases, workers are unable to win what they feel they are entitled to by any other means, and they use their only remaining weapon, the strike.

Won't the organizing drive cause strife and dissension in the community?

Experience has proved just the opposite. America's trade unions have spent hundreds of thousands of dollars to help abolish discrimination and intolerance. They work unceasingly to eliminate the social and economic injustices which breed strife. It is their fundamental purpose to promote the security which will minimize and eliminate strife.

Aren't union officials racketeers?

A few. You'll find racketeers in labor unions, just as you'll find them in business, in the professions and in every walk of American life. But the overwhelming majority of union officials make far less money than executives in other fields with similar responsibilities. The Constitution of the CIO Electrical Workers' Union, for example, says the three top officials "shall be paid a salary of an amount at least equal to the highest weekly wage paid in the industry, but not more than $6,000 a year."

Harold Seidman, an expert on the subject, says in his book, **Labor Czars**, "Labor racketeering would soon disappear if employers did not profit from it. Behind every labor racketeer one finds an unscrupulous employer."

Words of Wisdom

"Trade unionism has helped to give to everyone who toils the position of dignity which is his due."

Franklin D. Roosevelt

"Long ago we stated the reason for labor organizations. We said that union was essential to give laborers opportunity to deal on an equality with their employer."

U. S. Supreme Court

"We stand for the right of employees and employers alike to organize for collective bargaining and social action; protection of both in the exercise of this right, the obligation of both to work for the public good."

The Methodist Church

Don't union officials dictate to their members?

A few, again. But most unions are among the most democratically-run organizations in the country. All members have voting rights. Each may take part fully in all local discussions, elections and decisions. Policy decisions are made at national conventions, to which all local unions send elected delegates. Officers are elected either by referendum of the membership or at these conventions. Most unions hold conventions annually or every two years. Conventions sessions are almost always open to the public and proceedings are published. Discrimination against members because of race, color, sex or creed is forbidden in most union constitutions.

Why should unions meddle in politics?

It is more and more obvious that any group interested in the welfare of workers today must be deeply concerned with what happens in the halls of Congress. A wage cut in the form of uncontrolled prices is still a wage cut. Labor's chief interest is security—and real security can only be achieved through federal legislation such as the full employment bill, extension of the social security act, higher minimum wage, etc. Therefore, labor unions must support men for public office who will work for their objectives, in order truly to represent the interests of their members.

Don't unions charge excessive dues?

No. Monthly dues set by CIO unions usually range from $1 to $2, with most workers paying $1.50 a month or less. These modest sums cover all the expenses of local and national unions; for example, expenses involved in collective bargaining negotiations, legal proceedings against "unfair" employers, new organizing drives, strike benefits, research, the preparation of literature, union newspapers, etc. Only a portion of the dues is turned over to the union's national office. Usually about half stays in the local union treasury. Some AFL unions charge higher dues (in most cases $2 to $4 a month) but usually, they include a system of death benefits, sickness insurance, unemployment benefits, pension plans, homes for the aged and the like. In 1943, for example, the payments to members of AFL unions for such benefits amounted to over 18 million dollars.

Don't unions force workers to pay large and frequent assessments?

No. To meet emergency situations, some union constitutions provide machinery for levying of special taxes on members, but these provisions are rarely used. Last year, less than one-fourth of all CIO unions levied assessments payable to the internationals. In each of these cases, the assessment was only $1 or $2. Most union constitutions require membership approval by referendum vote before assessments can be levied.

Isn't the closed shop unfair?

Workers feel that some form of union security guarantee is essential for their protection, especially for these two reasons.

1) A plant with some union members and some non-union members encourages discriminatory practices by company officials—with favors to non-union men on thejob used as a constant threat against the union. If all workers are union members, far more harmonious employer-employee relationships are assured.

2) Union workers feel that they have worked and sacrificed to build a union which has won wage increases and better working conditions for all employees. They feel that men who benefit from the union should contribute to the union.

An Organized South is a Prosperous South

Too little money is the root of all the South's evil. The drives to unionize hundreds of thousands of Southern workers attack this root, and will mean a better day for all the people of the South.

Powerful union organization in the South will:

—Raise living standards more nearly in line with national living standards;

—Raise Southern health and education standards more nearly in line with national living standards;

—Keep money in the South, which is now drained off in profits to absentee owners;

—Make better and more active citizens and voters of millions;

—Strengthen the movement for welfare legislation for the South;

—End the careers of many Southern misrepresentatives who are holding back the progress of the nation; and

—Help to realize real democracy for our Negro citizens, and remove the barriers that keep the races in the South from working for their common good.

A few brief notes on what the relatively small and weak Southern labor movement has already achieved are in order.

Recent 18½c an hour wage increases in the steel, auto and rubber industries, 18c an hour in shipbuilding, and 15c an hour in the men's clothing industry have helped eliminate much of the South's substandard wages.

The Textile Workers Union recently won a wage increase for 25,000 workers in the South which puts more than five million dollars a year into their paychecks. It is easy to see that most of this money will go immediately into the pockets of local farmers and merchants.

Merchant sales rise, doctors and dentists have fewer charity patients, churches pay off long due debts and make improvements, the whole community prospers.

The Danville, Virginia, Bee, commenting on the effect of these increases on that textile town, writes that they "mean increased standard of living . . . and it enlarges the whole Danville horizon. A pay increase which means an added $3,500,000 circulated in this community in any one year is a large contribution to Danville's future."

Over the last five years, Southern textile wages in organized plants have risen from $13 a week to $26 a week.

But though important gains have been made, a Department of Labor survey (1943) of wage rates in 26 cities showed Southern cities far behind the nation, with Birmingham, Dallas and Atlanta the 24th, 25th and 26th cities, respectively. For example, workers in Cleveland earned 50 per cent more per hour than workers in comparable jobs requiring the same skills in Atlanta. Yet government surveys show that cost of living figures vary insignificantly between Northern and Southern cities.

The effects of the organizing drive on the political face of the South may be even more far-reaching than in the economic field. Union organization has always increased the workers' awareness of politics, and it has given them an opportunity to make their political views effective, as a group. Increasingly, unions have urged full citizenship upon their members, and conducted registration and voting campaigns which have altered many an election.

Thirty per cent of the Southern population of voting age voted in the 1944 election. We can expect that one of the first effects of the organizing drives will be to send this figure up considerably.

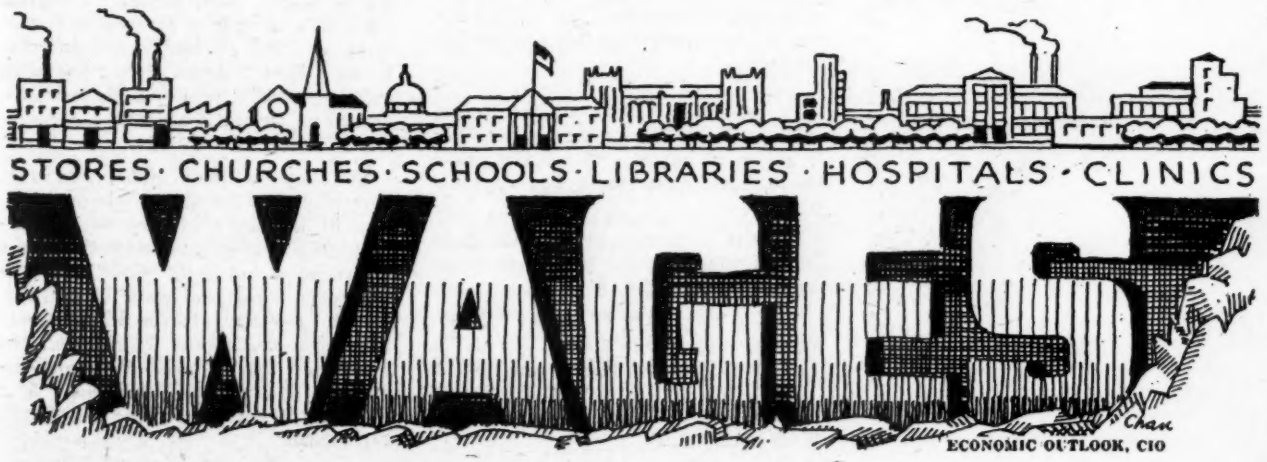
A bigger vote is a better vote. When the Oil Workers Union came into Martin Dies' district, it ceased to be Martin Dies' district, with resulting benefits to the whole nation. This is repeated in this year's election, when in Texas alone, Sumners, Gossett and Lanham, all with anti-labor voting records, are not running for reelection.

The 70 per cent of the people who are now voteless are almost entirely workers, small farmers and Negroes—the very groups whose votes would be most progressive if their ballots were cast. The day the missing 70 per cent go to the polls, the careers of the Rankins and the Bilbos, the Coxes and the Howard Smiths are over.

Perhaps none of the effects of the Southern organizing drives will be so beneficial in the long run as the contribution they will make toward removing the old barriers that keep the races in the South from working together for their common good. White and Negro workers once organized in the same unions have quickly learned to know each other better and to appreciate the identity of their economic and political interests.

It is just this growing democracy in the South that the reactionaries fear most. The potential labor and Negro vote in the South is a clear majority and could transform the South from the most reactionary influence in national politics to the most progressive (as happened during the days of the Populist movement). This explains the bitter opposition to the organizing drives from the poll tax politicians.

This is also why the whole Southern people will rally to the support of labor —for labor is at bat for the South.



ECONOMIC OUTLOOK, CIO

WHAT TO READ ABOUT LABOR

THE TRUTH ABOUT UNIONS. By Leo Huberman. The Pamphlet Press. $1.00.

The Truth About Unions is a simply written, straightforward, detailed account of how unions work. As such, on the eve of the greatest labor organizing drive the South has ever known, it ought to be read by every Southerner with curiosity about his—or her—world.

Leo Huberman has seen unions from most conceivable angles. He has been education director of one union, an active member in two, a teacher in many. He has been labor editor of a newspaper and has seen unions through the eyes of a reporter. He has been Chairman of the Department of Social Science at New College, Columbia University, and evaluates them from a scholar's viewpoint.

The Truth About Unions is admittedly pro-union. But it is no mere special pleading. It tells why a single employee is helpless and must join together with his fellow workers to insure a living wage and better working conditions. It analyzes how collective bargaining works on each side of the conference table when representatives of labor and capital sit down to draw up a contract. It tells what happens to a typical worker joining a typical union; of his initiation and of the way meetings are run. It tells what becomes of his monthly dues.

The Truth About Unions is too honest to deny that some union practices may be bad. It considers jurisdictional disputes, feather-bedding, and racketeering, and in condemning them, shows how they come about.

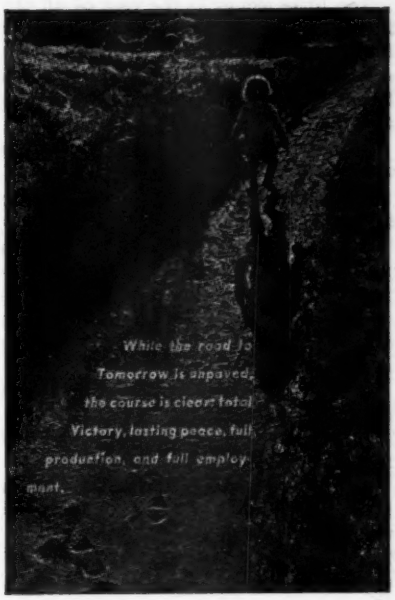
The Truth About Unions, not only because it analyzes the AFL, the CIO, the Railroad Brotherhoods, but also because it shows their relationship to a swift changing world, deserves your sober study.

Leo Huberman

"For Your Children Too" is about labor unions in the South and what they mean to our children. It is the story, in words and pictures, of how unions help children; by raising their fathers' wages and seeing they have jobs; by working for better conditions in the community, including better schools and playgrounds; by fighting race discrimination; by helping build a peaceful world in which children won't have to grow up to be soldiers.

As unions are always the first point of attack for all fascists, native as well as foreign, so children suffer most when unions are broken and when insecurity and bigotry can march unchecked. "For Your Children Too" tells how members of unions, by working together, try to build a secure world with freedom for everybody.

"For Your Children Too" is available at 10c copy, $7.50 per hundred copies.



ORGANIZED LABOR AND THE NEGRO. By Herbert R. Northrup. Harper and Bros., Publishers. $3.50.

A detailed study of union racial policies and the outlook for Negro labor. Mr. Northrup gives attention, first to the policies of the AFL and CIO nationally, then to the specific situations within the various unions: in the building trades, the railroads, textiles, shipbuilding, and many more.

NEGRO LABOR. A NATIONAL PROGRAM. By Robert C. Weaver. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $3.00.

An analysis of the Negro worker's past and of how a critical need for skilled labor, during the war against fascism, bent the color bar as never before. It considers the problems of the Negro worker in reconversion, and in so doing pleads for an effective full employment program.

* * *

Unions issue frequent publications not only to inform their members about what is going on, but also to tell the public about themselves. Basic labor publications are:

LABOR. Weekly paper of the Railroad Brotherhoods. 10 Independence Avenue, Washington, D. C.

THE AMERICAN FEDERATIONIST. The monthly magazine of the AFL. A. F. of L. Building, Washington 1, D. C.

THE CIO NEWS. The CIO's weekly newspaper. 718 Jackson Place N.W., Washington, D. C.

An excellent account of how a union affects a community is given in the article Replacing Fascism With Industrial Democracy, by Charles C. Webber, in the May, 1946, Social Questions Bulletin of the Methodist Federation for Social Service, 150 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, N. Y. Mr. Webber, a member of the New York East Annual Conference of the Methodist Church, tells what happened when the Amalgamated Clothing Workers went into Martinsville, Virginia.

* * *

One of the most valuable of publications for those wishing to understand labor and labor's program is Economic Outlook, published every month by the CIO's Department of Research and Education, 718 Jackson Place N.W., Washington 6, D.C. $1.00 a year. Economic Outlook is an eight page bulletin, full of facts, analysis, pictures, charts and statistics. Recent issues have dealt with union democracy, public health, and "economics to win the peace."

* * *

The Bible and the Working Man is an eight-page, colored comic style presentation of the story of how ancient the struggle of workers to better their lives by group action really is. "Since the beginning of religious history," says this leaflet, "the struggle for social justice has been the special concern of the prophets of God." The Bible and the Working Man is Publication No. 125 of the CIO, 2c a copy, 100 for $1.50, 1,000 for $12.50.

BOOKS IN BRIEF—A Review of New Pamphlets

The Rural South, issued by the Southern Rural Life Conference, is an 86-page, nicely illustrated guide to reading on the rural South for community leaders. It reviews in some detail a carefully selected list of books suggested by members of the advisory committee of the Council, grouped under such headings as The Land, Farming and the Farmer, The Church, Health, Assets and Liabilities. Available from The Southern Rural Life Council, George Peabody College for Teachers, Nashville 4, Tenn.

Health Problems

Three new publications deal with the health problems our country faces and the need for national health insurance.

The Committee for Kentucky's Report on Health, a 24-page illustrated and colorful booklet presenting the report of Dr. Philip E. Blackerby, State Health Commissioner of Kentucky, is full of valuable facts. It is available from the Committee, 427 S. Fourth Avenue, Louisville 2, Kentucky. The Report analyzes health conditions in Kentucky, pointing out for example that the death rate for tuberculosis, while it has been cut in half in the last 25 years, is still 50% above the national average and that out of an estimated 10,000 persons in Kentucky who have cancer, not more than 4,000 know they have it. The Report concludes with "A Plan of Action" by Dr. O. O. Miller, past president, Kentucky State Medical association, based on Dr. Blackerby's report and calling for more clinics, more hospital beds, and more public health units.

What Farm Families Spend for Medical Care, Miscellaneous Publication No. 561 of the U. S. Department of Agriculture, is also fascinating reading. This 18-page booklet, mostly by means of pictograms, shows the correlation between income and amount spent on doctors. It points out that while about 30% of urban families are covered by such voluntary prepaid medical care plans as the Blue Cross, less than 5% of farm families are so protected.

The Report to the Committee on Education and Labor Relating to Bill S. 1606 To Provide For A National Health Program, available from the U. S. Government Printing Office, gives full details on the National Health Act and contains the statement of Senator Robert F. Wagner on behalf of himself, Senator Murray and Representative Dingell. Ten pages of questions and answers about prepaid medical care are included.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Eaglefeather, but our company policy is to employ 100% Americans only."

The cartoon above appears in the pamphlet, Progress in Democracy, an excellent analysis of New York State's law against discrimination in employment, largely in useful question and answer form. Published by the New York Chapter, American Jewish Committee, 386 Fourth Avenue, New York 16, N. Y.

Reprints of the article, Church, State and Schools" by Lucille B. Millner, are available from the Unitarian Fellowship for Social Justice, 1201 Union St., Schenectady 8, N. Y., for 9c per copy or $1.00 per hundred postpaid. This article reveals the background and funds of the present effort of sectarian schools to invade public education.

The Department of Industrial Relations of the National Urban League, 1133 Broadway, Room 826, New York 10, N. Y., has issued a nine-page report, **Adjustment of Negro Veterans**, based on a detailed survey made of 50 cities. In some of these cities, Negro veterans constitute 50% of the total Negro registration in active USES files. Many veterans have declined to accept jobs which paid below the unemployment allowances granted them under the G.I. Bill of Rights. Apprenticeship opportunities and vocational training were found to be so rare as to be almost insignificant. In the Southern cities studied, no Negroes were found on the staff of the Veterans Administration, except in the Negro colleges. In Tennessee, for example, only 4 Negroes are employed by the Veterans Administration, although 35% of all men entering the service from that state were Negroes. In Louisiana, the VA employs 600 persons, of whom only 4 are Negroes. Not a single Negro could be found on the payroll of the USES in Tennessee and Louisiana. The Report concludes with an 8-point summary, and a 6-point program of recommended action.

Two bulletins have recently been published dealing with the police and minorities. The Department of Justice of the State of California has just issued a **Police Training Bulletin, A Guide to Race Relations for Police Officers.** Developed by policemen for policemen, the Guide, as Robert W. Kenny, Attorney General of California, says in a foreword, grew out of a course of training given the Richmond, California, Police Department with the cooperation of the American Council on Race Relations.

Freedom House (Willkie Memorial Building, 20 West 40th Street, New York 18, N. Y.) has just issued, most attractively illustrated, Police Action in Minority Problems, by Joseph T. Kluchesky, Chief of Police (Retired), Milwaukee, Wisconsin. "It is the function of a police department," says Mr. Kluchesky, "to maintain law and order. In times of group tensions, the ability of the police to prevent or to curb disorders will depend upon their own attitude toward the minorities involved and upon the attitude of the minority groups to the police. Naturally, the best rule of conduct for any police officer is to be equally courteous to all. The majority demands it; the minority is entitled to it."

The Southern PATRIOT

JUNE 1946

VOLUME 4 NUMBER 6

Published monthly by The Southern Conference for Human Welfare, 212½ Union Street, Nashville, Tennessee. Ten cents a copy, $1.00 a year. Twenty or more copies mailed to the same address, 25c a year. Entered as second class mail matter November 20, 1942, at the Postoffice, Nashville, Tennessee, under the Act of March 3, 1879.

☆

THE SOUTHERN CONFERENCE FOR HUMAN WELFARE

CLARK FOREMAN, *President*

TARLETON COLLIER, *Secretary*

ALVA W. TAYLOR, *Treasurer*

JAMES A. DOMBROWSKI
Administrator and Editor

TRENDS . . . .

Academic Freedom of Enterprise

Harding College, at Searcy, Arkansas, with only 300 students and a faculty of 40, is bigtime at the job of spreading the gospel of free enterprise. George S. Benson, president of Harding College, boasts that the school will spend $450,000 in 1946 in what amounts to NAM propaganda. Writing to solicit funds from corporation heads and wealthy individuals, Benson said his college "was a definite factor" in organizing a new national labor union guaranteeing the open-shop and prohibiting check-off. The college sends out a weekly column which appears in 3500 country newspapers, and runs a weekly radio program advocating free enterprise on 64 stations in 31 states.

South Lags in Libraries

Of the 587 counties in the United States without a single public library, 454 are in the 13 Southern states. The national average for people without public library service is 26%. The Southern average is 42%. These figures are disclosed by the 1945 Report of the American Library Association's Library Extension Board.

Away From the Land

One of the problems facing the rural South is the number of young people who move away as soon as they can. Recently, Superintendent of Schools Bobbitt surveyed rural Charlotte County, Virginia, high school students and found that out of the 393 white students who answered his questionnaire, 289 said they did not intend to stay in the county. Of the colored students, 148 out of 209 had definitely decided not to make their permanent homes there. Summing up the reasons the students gave, the University of Virginia's Extension Division said: "Almost all could be listed under two main reasons. Young people were demanding a richer life than the country offered both from the financial and from the social point of view."

Learning to Speak

A group of college, preparatory, and high school students meeting as a student congress and representing ten Southern states, under the sponsorship of the Southern Association of Teachers of Speech, went on record in Atlanta, Georgia, as condemning any member of the national Congress who would advocate measures which might result in racial discrimination. The measure received unanimous approval.

Doctors' Mortality High

The Mississippi State Board of Health has recently published a bulletin, "The Mississippi Doctor Shortage." In 1909, the bulletin reveals, there was a doctor for every 755 persons in Mississippi. In 1945 there was one for every 2,200 persons. While the population of the state has increased nearly 400,000 during the past 35 years, the number of physicians has shrunk nearly half, and over fifty per cent of the present doctors are over 60 years of age.

Law of the Lash

The Mississippi State Senate has upheld corporal punishment and the barbarous use of a leather strap, called "bullhide" or "Black Annie," as the only disciplinary method at the State penitentiary. The Senate sanctioned such punishment when it postponed consideration of a bill presented by Senator Howard McDonnell, Biloxi criminologist, proposing its abolition. Under prison regulations, fifteen lashes with the strap is the penalty for infraction of prison rules. The prisoner is forced to lie flat on the floor and is held by other inmates, while the lash flays his back. Rev. Roy Beasley, prison chaplain, said discontinuation of the strap would be unwise. He did not, apparently, comment as to whether it would be Christian.

Chickens Laying Low

That the markets for diversified farming in the South are ready and waiting was shown again in the report of the agricultural secretary of New Orleans' Association of Commerce. Only about 11% of the eggs sold in New Orleans in 1945 came from Louisiana hens, and only about 1½% of the live poultry. Dressed poultry receipts totaled 2,422,808 pounds with only 697 pounds coming from the state.

Absentee Ownership Grows

Absentee ownership of the South's cotton textile industry is mounting to new heights. In the last few years, millions of dollars of Northern capital have been spent in acquiring ownership of Southern factories, at almost fantastic prices. From January, 1943, to April 1 of this year, 90 factories have been bought outright. These mills, with 2,692,554 spindles and 57,964 looms, represent 12% of those in America's entire cotton textile industry.

Attention: Southern Libraries

The U. S. Government is selling books: Southern libraries take note. The Surplus War Property News Letter No. 98, March 23, 1946, says (page 4) that surplus books from the Army and Navy training courses are coming to the Library of Congress at the rate of three car-loads a week. "The Library will retain books suitable for its exchange or educational programs and offer the remainder to educational and governmental institutions at a price to cover the cost of care, handling and disposition (books remaining on hand will be put on sale through commercial channels). Inquiries about this disposition should be directed to Surplus Books, Library of Congress, Washington 25, D. C."

Enforcing the GI Bill

More than 150 Negro veterans, attending an Institute at Tougaloo College, Mississippi, to study GI benefits, said the right to vote is the only means by which Negro veterans in Mississippi will be able to obtain their proper share of the rights promised by state and federal laws. It was pointed out that Negro veterans in Mississippi can now obtain some vocational training in painting and interior decoration, but none at all in electrical, radio, plumbing, welding and other trades. The Conference was jointly sponsored by the College and by the Jackson Negro Chamber of Commerce.

Teacher Turnover 56%

Although it is scarcely news to find Southern teachers salaries and pupil costs the lowest in the nation, a recent circular of statistical information on state school systems, issued by the U. S. Office of Education, reinforces the need of the South for federal aid to education. The national average of current expenses per pupil is $41 a year in Mississippi. Alabama and Arkansas tie for next lowest, with $54 each. Of all Southern states, only Florida (132) is over the hundred dollar line. Average annual teachers' salary is $1,762. Not one Southern state is within $300 of that average. All four of the states paying less than $1000 a year are in the South; Mississippi again lowest with an annual average salary of $790. A recent survey shows that in the state of Mississippi "teacher-turnover" during the past two years has been 56%; that 26% of Mississippi's teachers have left the profession entirely; and that 86% of her schools have been forced to employ sub-standard teachers in one or more departments.

Keep Your Eye on Washington

As we go to press, it appears that the Senate, aroused to hysteria by strikes and threatened strikes, will pass legislation seriously curtailing labor's right to organize, bargain collectively and strike. Every Southern senator except Pepper voted for immediate consideration of the substitute Case Bill on May 10.

The bill to abolish the poll tax—to bring democracy to the South and representative government to the nation—has languished for more than three long years, waiting to reach the Senate floor, since its triumphant passage in the House of Representatives.

Sen. Barkley, who can put the measure on the Senate Calendar, has promised and failed, promised and failed. Several weeks ago, he said he could not interrupt the rigid schedule of the British loan, price control legislation and atomic energy legislation. But without a murmur, he interrupted the schedule to bring anti-labor legislation before the Senate.

Now Senator Pepper, chairman of the Steering Committee on HR 7, is trying to get the bill to the floor. HE NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT. He needs your letters and wires, especially from the South.

Tell him, as J. Lewis Henderson of Bay St. Louis, Mississippi, told him:

"I think I'm being followed."

—"My reasons for opposing the poll tax are more than personal, but I take my own case to illustrate. I have maintained my legal residence in Mississippi for many years, and have voted regularly. But I neglected to pay poll tax for just one year—last year. Now, because of poll tax requirements, I cannot vote for two years, although I am a home owner, a tax payer, and qualify as a citizen in every other way.

"I do not care how the poll tax is removed, so long as it is removed as a voting requirement. But I am confident that the poll tax in this state will be done away with sooner, and the cause of good government will be served best, if the anti-poll tax bill now pending in the Senate is passed.

He might have added that the Mississippi legislature recently refused even to lift its poll tax and give a free ballot to its veterans, just returned from foreign battlefields fighting for "democracy."

HELP SENATOR PEPPER GET THE BILL TO THE FLOOR NOW!

Southern Political Scene

Progressives won out in the May primary elections in Alabama and Florida.

The nomination of former Governor Spessard Holland as Democratic candidate for Junior Senator from Florida will give Senator Pepper a liberal coworker on the Senate floor, for the first time.

In Alabama, liberal and labor-supported "Big Jim" Folsom surprised all the political guessers by winning over four opponents. Congressman Claude Rains, backed by progressives, decisively defeated Joe Starnes, former Congressman and Dies Committee member.

Prospects for more liberal victories in the primaries are increased by the Justice Department's stand for the right of Negroes to vote in primary elections. The Justice Department, Solicitor General J. H. McGrath has said, will prosecute under the criminal code "any state or party official who attempts to prevent a person from voting because of color" in a primary or general election.

If the Department of Justice is indeed to prosecute election officials who deny the ballot to Negroes, such cases must be brought to their attention by an alert citizenry.

"It is our position," says the Department of Justice, "that the law has been settled." Two candidates for the Governorship of Georgia, Eugene Talmadge and E. D. Rivers, however, have a different position.

"That's a Joke, Son—You Don't Seem to Get It."

Says Talmadge, "Alien influences and communistic influences from the East desire Negroes to participate in our white primary in order to destroy the traditions and heritages of our Southland."

James Carmichael, progressive candidate for Governor, charges that if Talmadge or Rivers is elected, the Ku Klux Klan (already active in their behalf) will govern the State.

Meanwhile, Georgia citizens, in two elections this year, in Atlanta and Augusta, despite the cries of the "white supremacists," elected peoples' candidates to office: Mrs. Helen Mankin and William S. Morris. These two defeats for the machines augur well for the coming state election.

Citizens of Knoxville, Tennessee, have also risen in their might to fight the city machine. Incensed by the action of machine Mayor Cas Walker and his hand-picked city council, in ousting militant and honest city manager Paul Morton, Knoxvillians by the thousands vied to sign recall petitions for a new election of councilmen and mayor.

The election commission reported that 2,000 persons registered to vote in less that a week after the Morton ouster. And 1,000 persons obtained poll tax receipts in a single day. One estimate said more than 50,000 Knoxvillians out of the 200,000 population were now qualified to vote—a new high in the city's history.

In record time the recall petitions were filled and filed. An injunction secured by the machine is temporarily holding them up. But Knoxvillians are determined to win control of their city government.

The Southern Conference for Human Welfare Reports:

Tennesseans Organize

Seventy-five delegates from every part of the state, meeting in Nashville May 18, established the Committee for Tennessee, to be affiliated with the SCHW, and decided to press immediately for continuation of OPA price controls, and for the maximum number of registered voters in the state for the August primaries.

Rev. Arnold Slater of the Pilgrim Congregational Church of Chattanooga was elected chairman; Dr. O. B. Taylor of Knoxville, vice-chairman; and William G. Cornelius, ex-serviceman from Nashville, secretary-treasurer.

Chosen as members of the executive board were: Professor Godfrey Tietze, University of Chattanooga; the Rev. Richard R. Beasley, Knoxville; James F. Estes, Tennessee Veterans Association, Jackson; Rabbi Julius Mark, Vine Street Temple, Nashville; the Rev. Eugene Smathers, Calvary Church, Big Lick; and Mrs. Bernice Morrison, President of the Chattanooga Southern Conference chapter.

Plans for a campaign through schools, churches and civic organizations to secure the greatest possible registration of voters and payment of poll taxes received primary attention of the meeting. Delegates called for majority rule in Tennessee, pointing out that less than 30% of the state's potential voters participated in the 1944 elections.

Dr. James A. Dombrowski told the meeting that the Committee had been organized to tackle some of the economic and social problems of the state. He pointed out that among the 48 states, Tennessee ranks:

41st in per capita income

45th in cash income per farm

41st in per cent of homes wired for electric lights

40th in per cent of homes having running water

3rd in number of deaths due to malaria typhoid fever, pellagra, tuberculosis and syphilis

5th in percentage of illiteracy among native-born whites over 10

42nd in money spent per pupil in school, and

41st in average salary of teachers.

The Committee for Tennessee adopted an 18-point program, designed to meet these conditions, and raise the living standards of the people of the state. It includes support for extension of TVA and REA, state medical facilities, higher teachers salaries, government aid to small farmers and tenants to purchase land, and a higher minimum wage; and opposition to poll tax and other voting restrictions.

Dr. H. D. Bollinger, secretary of student activities for the Methodist Church, appealed for new members, stating that the Committee, operating above all lines of race or creed and in harmony with American democratic traditions, would help to realize the ideals of the Kingdom of God.

Among the members elected to the Committee's Advisory Board are: Rev. T. B. Cowan, Norris; Rev. M. S. Davage, Nashville; Dr. J. H. Daves, Knoxville; Mr. M. W. Day, Nashville; Miss Frances Fair, Nashville; Rabbi Abraham Feinstein, Chattanooga; Mrs. Patty Graves, Jackson; Mr. Myles Horton, Monteagle; President William Lloyd Imes, Knoxville; Rev. D. A. Jackson, Knoxville; Rev. Fleming James, Sewanee; Dr. Charles S. Johnson, Nashville; Mr. W. J. McGlothlin, Knoxville; Dr. Matthew Perry, Memphis; Mr. Webster Porter, Knoxville; Rev. Ira Sadler, Sparta; Dr. P. A. Stephens, Chattanooga. Mr. Alva W. Taylor, Nashville; Mrs. T. D. Upshaw, Chattanooga.

Congress Hears SCHW

Dr. Clark Foreman testified for the SCHW against the Bulwinkle Bill before the Senate Committee on Interstate Commerce; and before the House Ways and Means Committee, in favor of extended public assistance.

In opposing the Bulwinkle Bill, which exempts the railroads from the provisions of the anti-trust laws, Dr. Foreman pointed out that "the South needs all the protection it can get from economic exploitation, so its income can be raised . . ." Calling upon the Senate to resist the pressure of the railroad lobby, he showed that the Association of American Railroads, chief lobbyist for the bill, was responsible for one freight rate increase after another on Southern products.

In his testimony in favor of the Forand Bill (HR 5686) strengthening and extending public assistance under the social security system, Dr. Foreman pointed to the special needs of the South and proposed special federal aid to the poorest states, as well as the addition of a federal program for medical assistance and general assistance.

Dr. Foreman has also submitted to the House of Representatives a statement supporting extension of benefits in the old age and survivors insurance program, asking Congress "to make the social security act function for all occupations, no matter how humble or lowly."

SCHW in the News

Did you see these stories on the SCHW in:

READERS SCOPE for May: A sketch of our president, Clark Foreman, "A Southerner's Southerner."

AMMUNITION for May: An article by Dr. James A. Dombrowski, "Come South and Organize."

PULSE for May: A story by Lucia Pitts, Administrative Secretary of the Washington Office, "This is My Story of the SCHW."

COLLIER'S for June 1: "Ruddy Rodeo," by Walter Davenport. An article discussing various groups organizing independent voters.

Ickes Scores Poll Tax

Harold L. Ickes, former Secretary of the Interior, delivered a blistering attack on poll taxers and the poll tax system when he spoke to 600 cheering listeners at a dinner sponsored by the Washington Committee of the SCHW.

"In 1940, at Senator Bilbo's last election," Ickes said, "he received 91,384 votes. This represents slightly more than four per cent of Mississippi's population.

"Brazilla Carroll Reece was given in 1942 the magnificent total of 19,778 votes. This staggering plurality represented over five per cent of the first district's population. As you know, this five per cent congressman has recently been elected National Committee chairman of the Republican party.

"Rankling Rankin was swept into office when three per cent of the district's population voted for him in 1942.

"Senator Bilbo and his political hillbillies will continue their effrontery as long as the Senate maintains its tail-between-legs docility toward the filibuster."

One of the reasons for widespread inability to pay the poll tax, Ickes pointed out, is that much profit from Southern industries is "siphoned off to nonresident financiers and absentee owners."

Other speakers at the overflow dinner at the Statler Hotel were: the Rev. Lee Sheppard, pastor, Pullen Memorial Church, Raleigh, and chairman of the Committee for North Carolina; the Rev. Carter Harrison, rector, St. John's Episcopal Church, Hampton, and chairman of the Committee for Virginia; and Dr. Clark Foreman, SCHW President. Judge Hastie, newly appointed Governor of the Virgin Islands, presided.